



## Protecting Kansas' families, Every person's responsibility

The primary responsibility of government at all levels is to protect the citizens it serves. As Governor, I take that responsibility very seriously. I want to assure you that we are doing everything within our resources to prepare for that emergency we hope never comes. In doing so, earlier this month, I proclaimed September as Kansas Preparedness Month.

Our Homeland Security Council has developed a statewide action plan. Recently, our state was recognized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for having one of the best systems in the country for awarding homeland security grants, and providing emergency equipment for first-responders. Kansas has awarded over \$28 million to hospitals, public health providers, first responders, law enforcement, emergency medical services and emergency management to be used for planning, training, conducting exercises and purchasing equipment.

Our preparedness is put to the test on a regular basis by storms, tornadoes and flooding and those we count on to respond always come through. In the past 12 months, our emergency teams have worked in 62 Kansas counties after straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding destroyed approximately \$12 million of property. It's a team effort that requires coordination between state and local governments and citizens.

Preparedness is the responsibility of every American. If the day ever comes that we are called upon to respond to a major natural disaster or terrorist attack, it won't be enough that first-responders and emergency personnel are prepared to respond. Citizens must also be prepared to do their part. I encourage Kansas families to prepare an emergency kit and a communications plan.

Information about emergency preparedness and homeland security can be obtained by calling your local Emergency management office or going to one of the following Web sites:

**Kansas Emergency Management** <http://www.accesskansas.org/kdem>

**Citizen Corps/CERT** <http://www.citizenscorps.gov/programs/cert.shtm>

**American Red Cross** <http://www.redcross.org/>